

II. Claim Amendments

- 1) (Presently Amended) An eExpression cassette, characterized in that said expression cassette comprises a promoter obtainable from the region between the stop codon of the *yjaF* gene and the start codon of the *rpsF* gene as found on the *Bacillus subtilis* genome.
- 2) (Presently Amended) An eExpression cassette, characterized in that said expression cassette comprises a promoter having the following characteristics
 - a) a nucleotide sequence TATAAT, preferably GTATAAT or TATAATA at the –10 site,
 - b) a nucleotide sequence TTGTAA, preferably GTTGTAAT or TTGTAAA at the –35 site,
 - c) a spacer of 17 +/- 2 nucleotides, preferably 17 +/- 1 nucleotides, more preferably 17 nucleotides.
- 3) (Presently Amended) The eExpression cassette according to claim 1 ~~or 2~~, characterized in that the promoter comprises the nucleotide sequence as depicted in SEQ ID NO 1.
- 4) (Presently Amended) The eExpression cassette according to claim 1 ~~or 2~~, characterized in that the promoter comprises the nucleotide sequence as depicted in SEQ ID NO 2.
- 5) (Presently Amended) The eExpression cassette according to claim 1 ~~or 2~~, characterized in that the promoter comprises the nucleotide sequence as depicted in SEQ ID NO 3.
- 6) (Presently Amended) The Expression cassette according to Claim 1~~Expression cassette according to claims 1-5~~, characterized in that the promoter is preceded by a stretch of nucleotides having at least 1, preferably 2, more preferably even three AT-rich regions upstream of the –35 region.

- 7) (Presently Amended) The eExpression cassette according to claim 6, characterized in that said stretch of nucleotides having AT-rich regions upstream of the -35 region comprises the nucleotide sequence as depicted in SEQ ID NO 4, preferably in SEQ ID NO 5, more preferably in SEQ ID NO 6.
- 8) (Presently Amended) An eExpression cassette, characterized in that said expression cassette comprises a promoter having a consensus sequence AAAANNNNNNTTTT_nAAAANNNNNNTTTT, wherein $10 < n < 150$
- 9) (Presently Amended) The eExpression cassette according to claim 8, characterized in that the promoter comprises the nucleotide sequence as depicted in SEQ ID NO: 7, preferably in SEQ ID NO: 8, more preferably in SEQ ID NO: 9.
- 10) (Presently Amended) Recombinant plasmid characterized in that said plasmid comprises an expression cassette according to Claim 1 ~~claims 1-9~~.
- 11) (Presently Amended) Bacterial host cell comprising an expression cassette according to Claim 1 ~~claims 1-9~~ or a recombinant plasmid according to claim 10.
- 12) (Cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer)
- 13) (Cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer)
- 14) (Cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer)
- 15) (Presently Amended) A m~~M~~ethod for the heterologous expression of a gene, characterized in that said method comprises the transfection of a bacterium with an

expression cassette according to Claim 1 ~~claims 1-9~~.